

**PATENT COOPERATION TREATY**  
**PCT**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY**  
(Chapter I of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

**(PCT Rule 44bis)**

Applicant's or agent's file reference M03B327PCT/ASB	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b>		See item 4 below
International application No. PCT/GB2005/000126	International filing date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 14 January 2005 (14.01.2005)	Priority date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 23 January 2004 (23.01.2004)	
International Patent Classification (8th edition unless older edition indicated) See relevant information in Form PCT/ISA/237			
Applicant <b>THE BOC GROUP PLC</b>			

1. This international preliminary report on patentability (Chapter I) is issued by the International Bureau on behalf of the International Searching Authority under Rule 44 bis.1(a).

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 7 sheets, including this cover sheet.

In the attached sheets, any reference to the written opinion of the International Searching Authority should be read as a reference to the international preliminary report on patentability (Chapter I) instead.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. I	Basis of the report
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. II	Priority
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. III	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VI	Certain documents cited
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application

4. The International Bureau will communicate this report to designated Offices in accordance with Rules 44bis.3(c) and 93bis.1 but not, except where the applicant makes an express request under Article 23(2), before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date (Rule 44bis .2).

	<p>Date of issuance of this report  <b>24 July 2006 (24.07.2006)</b></p>
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